

Minutes of the State Board of Health

July 10, 2001

A public work session of the Washington State Board of Health (SBOH) was held at the Heathman Lodge in Vancouver, Washington. The work session was called to order at 7:12 p.m. by Linda Lake, Chair:

The following Board members were present:

Linda Lake, Chair

Charles R. Chu, DPM

Ed Gray, MD

Thomas H. Locke, MD, MPH

Joe Finkbonner, MHA

Vickie Ybarra, RN, MPH

The Honorable Margaret Pageler, JD

Carl S. Osaki, RS, MSPH

Mary Selecky, Secretary, Dept. of Health

The Honorable Neva J. Corkrum, Vice-Chair

State Board of Health Staff present:

Don Sloma, Executive Director

Janice Englehart, Senior Health Policy Advisor

Craig McLaughlin, Senior Health Policy Manager

Melissa Burke-Cain, Assistant Attorney General

Desiree Robinson, Executive Assistant

Doreen Garcia, Senior Health Policy Advisor

Ramona Nelson, Office Assistant Senior

Guests and Other Participants:

Keith McCandless, Consultant

Katherine Sanders, Director, Healthy Communities, Washington Health Foundation

Jeff Mero, Executive Director, Association of Washington Public Health Districts

PRIORITY WORK SESSION

Craig McLaughlin, Senior Health Policy Manager to the Board, directed the Board's attention to the materials behind Tab 13 and discussed updates to the Staff Report on Board Priorities Research, state budget provisos that provided funds for health policy research, the Response Statement from Laurie Garrett, and planned activities of other entities, such as the Department of Health and the Interagency Medical Directors.

Keith McCandless, consultant, facilitated a discussion of past Board successes and the factors that make for successful Board activities. No formal notes were taken during this work session. Mr. McCandless developed a large-format graphic representation of the discussion, which is available for viewing at the Board office. Audio recordings of the discussion are also available.

The work session adjourned at 9:38 p.m.

July 11, 2001

A meeting of the Washington State Board of Health (SBOH) was held at the Heathman Lodge in Vancouver, Washington. The public meeting of the SBOH was called to order 8:40 a.m. by Linda Lake, Chair, who addressed the attendees with the following statement:

“This is a public meeting of the SBOH held under provision of RCW 43.20. Notice of the meeting was provided in accordance with provisions of RCW 34.05, the Administrative Procedures Act. Those members having any conflict of interest on any item coming before the Board will report that conflict with respect to the particular subject under consideration. In case of challenge of any Board members by the public, the Board shall decide the status of the challenged members to participate before considering the substance of the matter.

Copies of all materials supplied to the Board for today’s meeting have been available since close of business last Friday from the Board’s Olympia office and on the Board’s Web site at www.doh.wa.gov/sboh. They are also available today, along with anything else we have received since, at the table in the back of the room. To conserve public funds, we have only made as many copies as we feel will be needed, so we may run out of some particularly popular items. If you do not find a document you need, please ask Desiree Robinson, or another Board staff person for one.

Our meeting today is open to the public, so please feel free to listen in on informal discussions involving Board members or staff, including any that may occur during breaks or lunch.”

The following Board members were present:

Linda Lake, Chair

Charles R. Chu, DPM

Ed Gray, MD

Thomas H. Locke, MD, MPH
of Health

Joe Finkbonner, MHA
Vice-Chair

Vickie Ybarra, RN, MPH

The Honorable Margaret Pageler, JD

Carl S. Osaki, RS, MSPH

Mary Selecky, Secretary, Department

The Honorable Neva J. Corkrum,

State Board of Health Staff present:

Don Sloma, Executive Director
Assistant

Janice Englehart, Senior Health Policy Advisor
Advisor

Craig McLaughlin, Senior Health Policy Manager
Senior

Melissa Burke-Cain, Assistant Attorney General

Desiree Robinson, Executive

Doreen Garcia, Senior Health Policy

Ramona Nelson, Office Assistant

Guests and Other Participants:

Mary Kufeldt-Antle, Board Chair, Southwest Washington Health District
Dr. Karen Steingart, Health Officer, Southwest Washington Health District
Mr. Geoff Lang, President & CEO, Southwest Medical Center
Dr. Gil Rodriquez, Southwest Medical Center
Kay Koontz, Executive Director, Southwest Washington Health District
Keith McCandless, Consultant

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

- *Motion: To approve the Jul 10-11, 2001 agenda as submitted.
Approved: Osaki/Chu.*

ADOPTION OF JUNE 13, 2001 MEETING MINUTES

- *Motion: To approve the June 13, 2001 minutes as submitted.
Motion/Second: Selecky/Osaki the motion passed unanimously.*

PRIORITY HEALTH GOAL – CHILDREN’S HEALTH AND WELL BEING UPDATE

Board member Vickie Ybarra, RN, MPH and Board staff Doreen Garcia provided an update from the Children’s Subcommittee. Ms. Ybarra referred to the materials in Tab 4, including the brochure on children’s clinical preventive services. She recommended that the Subcommittee revise its work plan to include a national study of states requiring well-child checkups. Ms. Garcia provided a brief update and timeline on rules that the Subcommittee will be reviewing this year.

Motion: The Washington State Board of Health has determined that it is unable to conduct the planned 2001 collaborative assessment with OSPI, DSHS, and DOH to assess children receiving well-child screenings by school entry in Washington. In lieu of this assessment, the Board shall conduct a survey of states throughout the nation that require well child screenings by school entry.

Motion: Ybarra on behalf of the Children’s Subcommittee. Passed unanimously.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH UPDATE

Board member Mary Selecky, Secretary, Department of Health, provided an update from the Department of Health. She reported that the manufacturer of the tetanus vaccine has informed her they do not have adequate supply for distribution to Washington. She expects that this shortage will also occur again with the flu vaccine. She explained that because of recent storms in Central and Eastern Washington, many farms and workers are experiencing difficulty and work loss. Secretary Selecky added that the lawsuit over HIV names reporting

was dropped. Melissa Burke-Cain, Assistant Attorney General added that Assistant Attorney General Karen Jensen should be credited for her hard work in making this happen.

Secretary Selecky reported that a utility company from Connecticut has “misplaced” two spent nuclear fuel rods. It is possible that these fuel rods were sent to the Department of Ecology’s low-level radioactive waste site at Hanford. It is also possible that the company sent them to other sites around the country. She added that many parties including the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the Department of Energy, the utility company and DOH are actively working to locate the missing fuel rods.

Secretary Selecky described some of the reductions that DOH experienced in the 2001-2003 State Budget including reductions in EMS and trauma. DOH did receive money for universal distribution of the Prevnar vaccine. She added that the Legislature awarded funds for drinking water to implement federal rules and provide support to the local jurisdictions for Group B system monitoring. Board Vice-Chair the Honorable Neva J. Corkrum, added that local health jurisdictions received their backfill funding.

Board member the Honorable Margaret Pageler, JD proposed forming a coalition to bring pressure on drug companies to deliver vaccines. She proposed that the Board participate in such a strategy. Secretary Selecky described a number of public and medical associations engaged in this kind of collaborative work. She said that it would certainly be in the Board’s interest to be engaged in this collaborative work. Vice-Chair Corkrum proposed that the Board make some kind of resolution on this issue. Board Executive Director Don Sloma reported several issues that are going on related to prescription drugs and vaccines. The Governor asked all state agencies to look at prescription drug purchasing. The subject of availability of vaccines did not come into this process yet. However, price is a factor in being able to distribute vaccines universally. This issue could be brought to this Governor’s forum. Mr. Sloma also said that Laurie Garrett, author of *The Coming Plague* and *Betrayal of Trust*, makes the point in much of her work that the pharmaceutical interests are really undermining public health’s ability to address global epidemics. He referred to page 10 of the Laurie Garret response statement in Tab 13.

Board member Carl S. Osaki, RS, MSPH reported that he would be having discussions on Group B systems with DOH. He expects that this issue will be coming before the Board in the coming months.

SBOH STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS AND OTHER BOARD BUSINESS

Mr. Sloma spoke to particular letters that the Board has received, as described in the FYI sheet at the back of the agenda. He also spoke to several letters included in Tab 6. He mentioned the budget proviso from the legislature to do specific genetics work. He also announced that

Board staff Janice Englehart is leaving State Board of Health and is leaving state Government to move abroad.

WELCOME/INTRODUCTION

Mary Kufeldt-Antle, Board Chair, Southwest Washington Health District, welcomed the Board to Clark and Skamania Counties. She described her local Board's commitment to protecting the health of the people of this community. She described the case of ecoli at Battle Ground Creek, the problem of a failed septic system, and the recent release of noxious emissions from the Georgia Pacific Company to illustrate the collaborative and effective work of her Board and the many local, state and federal participating agencies.

Dr. Karen Steingart, Health Officer, Southwest Washington Health District, welcomed the Board to Southwest Washington and introduced the discussion on "Access to Medical Care." Recognizing that part of the problem of access is the loss of primary care, she told a story about an insured woman's efforts to access care when her child had a cough. She later learned the child had pertussis. She noted that low reimbursement rates for physicians and the tremendous population growth that are contributing to this problem.

ACCESS TO CARE ISSUES IN SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON

Mr. Geoff Lang, President & CEO, Southwest Medical Center, described the access problems facing Clark County, including physician shortages. His overheads summarize this presentation.

Dr. Gil Rodriguez, Southwest Medical Center, continued this presentation. He described Southwest Medical Center's attempts to understand the problem of physician shortages in Southwest Washington.

Kay Koontz, Executive Director, Southwest Washington Health District, pointed out that one of the issues facing Southwest Washington in the context of access is physician shortages. Her presentation is summarized in her overheads. She shared the extensive collaborative efforts to improve access to care. She also spoke of capacity problems within clinics and the rise in emergency room visits by increasingly sicker patients. She asked for discussion around three questions: 1) how can we work together to address provider shortages; 2) what do we do in the border community (next to Oregon); and 3) how do we deal with problems of access in a highly insured community.

Board member Charles Chu, DPM described the dilemma facing providers. He suggested that reimbursement rates are dropping so significantly that providers are being forced out of business. Dr. Chu also said that enrollment rates for podiatrist schools are decreasing. He added that high debt and low reimbursement rates are discouraging young people from

pursuing medical careers. Dr. Steingart asked what the State Board of Health could do to address the issue. Board member Thomas H. Locke, MD, MPH suggested that the debate is always focused on the right price, when it should be responding to the question of getting quality care in the right place at the right time. He said that the Board's work on access has attempted to address this. The Board may be able to contribute to framing the questions a little more appropriately. He added that this is the ultimate multi-jurisdictional problem. Dr. Locke complimented Southwest Washington on its collaborative approach.

Secretary Selecky acknowledged the important point made by the speakers that the problem of access is more than an issue for the uninsured.

MIKE KREIDLER, INSURANCE COMMISSIONER

Commissioner Kreidler provided an overview of the Insurance Commissioner's authority: what he can do and what he cannot do. His duties are broad and include: administering all insurance programs (including house, car, fire, etc), approving rates and forms, and protecting patients' rights to privacy. He cannot set repayment schedules, regulate self-insured programs or government supported systems, such as Medicaid, parts of Medicare, and the Basic Health Plan. Recognizing the constraints of his position, he acknowledged the failing system and noted several opportunities for needed change.

He recognized the recent passage of the patient's bill of rights and pointed to several warning signs that the system is failing, including premium increases. He stated the need to move into some form of universal access with a community rating system, but added that he is not advocating a single payer plan. He recognizes that the U.S. represents 4% world's population and consumes 47% of the health care dollars and he spoke to the need for reform in the system that emphasizes improvements in health status and not simply increases in spending. He stated that improvements couldn't be limited to high technology interventions. He then suggested that the Board might have an opportunity to influence change.

He suggested the possibility of standardizing health care plans, noting that it could help to address some of the system's problems. He added that there might be some carriers and employers willing to take this approach. The concept of "Healthy Basics" may be worthy of consideration. He suggested that high deductibles with preventive services available for something like \$50 per month is one possibility. He spoke to the need to share risk as a society, using maternity services as an example of a medical service that is not used by all but should be supported by all.

He posed the rhetorical question: What can I do as Insurance Commissioner? Recognizing the limitations in his role, he shared his efforts to participate in a number of forums around the state, to work on other collaborative efforts, and to streamline the process and make other needed improvements.

He then asked what the Board could do? Referring to the Board's statutory authority to improve the health status of Washingtonians, he suggested that the Board could press people to address issues inside and outside of government. He also recognized the Board's work on health disparities and the work on access related to the public health improvement plan as important. In the realm of health information, he suggested that the Board could play a role in accessing good information.

Ms. Pageler stated that there is a window of opportunity to hold insurers accountable with the patient bill of rights. She asked about whether or not the Insurance Commissioners Office could be used to require insurers to report on overhead costs, response times, etc. She described this function as similar to what utilities require airlines to report, adding that some type of bench marking is a good way to get word out and hold insurers accountable in the public's mind.

Mr. Kreidler responded that this is a good idea. He stated however that the big problem is postoperative denial. Initially, a surgery is approved and the procedure is done. Later coverage is denied for a variety of reasons. He wants to make sure that all parties are playing equally and fairly: insurance companies, employers, hospitals, doctors, and patients.

Board member Joe Finkbonner, MHA recognized the Commissioner's efforts to include tribal providers in reimbursement issues regarding patients bill of rights.

IDA ZODROW, ACTING CHAIR, GOVERNOR'S SUB-CABINET ON HEALTH

Ida Zodrow, Acting Chair, Governor's Sub-Cabinet on Health and Acting Administrator of the Health Care Authority, summarized the work of the Sub-Cabinet. Her presentation is summarized in her PowerPoint slides.

Chair Lake asked about how to combine purchasing power with need to address vaccine shortages that the State is experiencing. Secretary Selecky clarified the need for State forums to combine with national efforts to address this particular issue. Ms. Zodrow suggested the possibility of using the collective purchasing power as a way to influence pharmaceutical company behavior. Dr. Locke made the point that we have system deficiencies that are undermining everyone's ability to administer high quality care. Chair Lake spoke to the potential problem of saving money and having that money diverted outside the health system. Mr. Osaki asked how the Health Care Authority communicates with the beneficiaries and consumers of health care. Ms. Zodrow acknowledged that the Governor's Sub-Cabinet does not do a very good job of connecting with consumers. Mr. Sloma stated that the State's Health Insurance Benefit Advisors (SHIBA) is an education outlet in State government that operates at the grassroots level. He suggested that they could be extremely useful for this purpose.

Board member Ed Gray, MD cautioned that the credibility of the Sub-Cabinet is at stake if they do not deliver something new and meaningful.

BRIEFING HRSA GRANT ON ACCESS TO MEDICAL CARE AND INSURANCE

Mich'l Needham, Senior Policy Analyst, OFM and Jenny Hamilton, Senior Policy Analyst, OFM described the one-year \$1.2 million HRSA planning grant on Access to Medical Care and insurance. Their presentation was summarized in PowerPoint slides and in the brochure distributed.

Dr. Locke acknowledged the importance of this work and stressed the need to look beyond lack of insurance as a part of the Access problem. He urged the group to be in contact with the local health departments for connections to communities. Ms. Ybarra encouraged the speakers to use their work to inform policymakers in Washington. She said that she has watched Oregon's HRSA process, noting that they have admired the problem well.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

No public testimony.

WORK SESSION ON BOARD PRIORITIES FOR 2001-03

The Board and staff participated in a series of exercises, facilitated by Mr. McCandless, that helped clarify priority projects that the Board might want to undertake during 2001-03. The Board discussion primarily focused on genetics, continued work on health disparities, continued work on children's issues, exploring ways to utilize and refine the menu of critical health services (in collaboration with the Public Health Improvement Partnership), and preparing the state health report. The Board also discussed reserving some staff capacity for emerging environmental health issues. Notes were not taken during this session, but audio recordings are available on cassette tape.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 pm.

WASHINGTON STATE BOARD OF HEALTH

Linda Lake, Chair